Communication essentials

Thank-you letters

- Always send a thank-you letter after an interview. Show the people you met that you appreciate their time and attention. Thank-you letters can be sent via email, a handwritten note, or a formal letter.

- Be sure to send the thank-you promptly—it’s best to send it within 24 hours of your meeting or exchange. The bottom line is that you want the note to reach them before they’ve made their decision.

- To avoid burning bridges send a thank-you letter to an employer with whom you’ve decided not to accept a position.

More online: CareerNetwork.msu.edu/ThankYou

Using the phone

- Taking a cell phone call when with another person can be rude. This is especially true during an interview, site visit, career fair, or other professional event!

- Silence your phone and put it away. Texting, checking your phone for email, and being constantly distracted by your phone is likely to make you seem uninterested.

- When leaving a voice mail or message, speak slowly and clearly so your message is clear. Keep your name and phone number to ensure the employer can call you back.

- Return calls the day they’re received. If for some reason you can’t call back the same day, call within 24 hours.

- Make sure that the greeting for your voice mail is professional. Employers often complain about greetings that include loud music or are unprofessional.

Effective email

- Don’t use an unprofessional email address. The recipient could delete the message. Your MSU email or a Gmail account are the best bet.

- Include a meaningful subject line that makes it clear what will be covered in the message, such as “Jose Vega—Confirming Friday Interview Time” or “MSU Food Science Junior Seeking Information.”

- Be sure to include your full name and contact information in each email.

- There is no guarantee that an email is private.